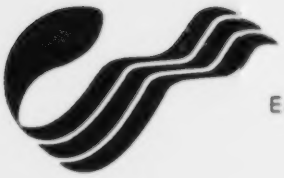

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THE DRIFTNET ISSUE

FEDERAL INITIATIVES

Fisheries and Oceans
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Canada

NEWS RELEASE
COMMUNIQUÉ

JUNE 10, 1991

SCIENTIFIC REVIEW MEETING OF NORTH PACIFIC HIGH SEAS DRIFTNET FISHERIES, JUNE 11-14, 1991

A scientific review meeting hosted by Canada will be held at the Institute of Ocean Sciences in Sidney, B.C. June 11-14, 1991. This meeting is part of a process related to the United Nations resolutions on high seas driftnet fishing. These resolutions reflect the high degree of international concern about the use on the high seas of driftnets (large non-selective monofilament nylon nets) and their potential impact on marine resources. Canada co-sponsored these resolutions and continues to be an active participant in international efforts to curtail high seas driftnet fishing.

The U.N. resolutions call for a moratorium by June 30, 1992 on all high seas driftnet fishing unless or until effective conservation and management measures are taken to prevent the unacceptable impact of driftnets on the living resources of the sea. The resolutions further call on all interested members of the international community to continue to consider and, by 30 June 1991, review the best available scientific data on the impact of large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing and agree upon further co-operative regulation and monitoring measures, as needed.

Scientists from Canada, the U.S.A., Japan, South Korea and Taiwan will participate in the Sidney meeting. They will be joined by observers from Australia, New Zealand, the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC). A second scientific meeting scheduled for Tokyo, Japan in November is to be hosted by the INPFC.

The June 1991 meeting is an important step in the overall process leading toward a decision on implementation of the U.N. moratorium on driftnet fishing. It will allow the best available information to be presented and compiled in a report which will be transmitted to the United Nations following the meeting. The meeting is restricted to scientific participants to encourage presentation of

the needed information within a scientific forum. Approximately 40 scientific papers will be presented by Canada, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and the U.S.A. dealing with the driftnet fisheries of the North Pacific and their impact on marine life.

Canada has banned the use of large-scale driftnets in its waters, and sought to terminate their use on the high seas particularly in the North Pacific Ocean. Because of their large size, extending up to 40 kilometres, driftnets are a notoriously non-selective and wasteful type of fishing gear. They cause the entrapment of both targeted species such as squid and non-targeted species such as salmon, marine mammals and seabirds. Concerns over the environmental and ecological impacts of these large incidental catches have been strongly voiced by the Government and people of Canada. Canada has supported work to develop alternative, selective fishing gear as a replacement for driftnets.

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JUNE 10, 1991

THE THREAT OF HIGH SEAS DRIFTNETS: CANADA'S RESPONSE

Following is a list of Canadian initiatives aimed at controlling and curtailing high seas driftnet fishing practices:

- In 1982 Canada was the first country to bring to the attention of members of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC) the serious situation resulting from the use of driftnets.

- In 1986 Canada became the first country to carry out scientific studies on the effects of the squid driftnet fishery on the interception of North American-origin salmonids and other marine mammals through a research cruise on the M.V. Ricker.

- At the 1986 annual INPFC meeting Canada was successful in having the driftnet issue placed on the regular agenda of the Standing Committee on Biology and Research. In addition, Canada participates in a sub-committee established to deal with the by-catch in driftnet operation and to investigate methods to reduce incidental by-catch in fishing gear.

- In November 1987, the government announced a new policy to ban the use of large-scale squid driftnets inside the Canadian 200-mile zone. This action was unprecedented among fishing nations, and has served as a model for recent bans by other countries, including Australia and New Zealand.

- Canada joined with the United States in 1987 to demand that Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan implement more stringent regulation of their driftnet fleets. As a result, they have since enforced domestic regulations to prohibit incidental taking of salmon, to control the discarding of marine debris, and to place fishing boundary limitations on their squid fleets.

- In May 1989, Canada and the United States achieved a breakthrough agreement with Japan to allow North American scientific observers on board its squid driftnet vessels. An

expanded agreement for 1990 was recently concluded allowing for the placement of 98 scientific observers - 41 Japanese and 57 North Americans (10 of whom are Canadian) - on board Japanese squid and large mesh tuna driftnet vessels. This agreement also requires satellite transmitters on all Japanese vessels, clear vessel and gear markings and submission to enforcement boardings. These undertakings are expected to provide a sound basis for further international action to control the use of driftnets and result in stringent enforcement against violators of agreed fishing boundaries. Similar agreements are being implemented with Korea and Taiwan. In all cases, expansion of driftnet operations is not permitted.

- A team of Department of Fisheries and Oceans scientific researchers on the Departmental research vessel, the W.E. Ricker, gathered data the summer of 1990 on high seas squid driftnet fisheries. The research cruise was aimed primarily at obtaining more information about the number and origin of salmon caught by high seas squid driftnets in the North Pacific.

- The Department of National Defence has undertaken air surveillance flights north of the high seas squid driftnet fishing boundary. This enables us to obtain photographic evidence of vessels illegally driftnet fishing for salmon in the North Pacific Ocean.

- Canadian officials are also working closely with U.S. enforcement authorities to halt Taiwan's illegal marketing of high seas driftnet salmon in our traditional export markets. Results in this area will greatly decrease the incentive for Taiwan to continue this fishery.

- Through the INPFC Canada launched a working group in November 1989 to examine alternative fishing methods. We intend to carry this work forward in the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and seek meaningful results.

- In August 1990, Canada tabled a submission to the United Nations in support of continued progress to curtail large-scale driftnet fishing and prevent its adverse impacts on marine resources as provided in last year's U.N. resolution on the subject.

- In September 1990, successful bilateral consultations were held with Thailand to discuss measures by Thailand to curb purchases of illegally harvested North Pacific salmon. Progress was realized through their government and industry undertakings to ensure that such trade will be rapidly declining. Canada is seeking similar bilateral consultations with other Pacific Rim purchasers of Taiwan-caught salmon.

- In October 1990, Canada hosted a quadrilateral meeting in Ottawa with the USA, the USSR and Japan to discuss the principles that could form the basis for a new convention for the conservation of North Pacific salmon. The proposed convention would seek to prohibit high seas fisheries for anadromous stocks in the North Pacific and take the place of the INPFC.

- During December 11-13, 1990 Canada hosted a multilateral meeting in Ottawa to promote agreement on a North Pacific Marine Science Organization. This proposed research organization would include Canada, the USA, China, the USSR and Japan. The parties would take advantage of their combined scientific resources to facilitate research on marine biology, oceanography and pollution in the North Pacific Ocean. Once established, this organization is expected to contribute to improved scientific understanding of the resources of the North Pacific, including the impacts of driftnet fisheries on these resources.

- As an overall objective, Canada is actively engaged in ensuring that the December 22, 1989 United Nations General Assembly resolution on driftnets, of which we were a leading co-sponsor, is implemented. In particular, we have been successful in stopping further expansion of driftnet fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific.

- We are now coordinating our efforts with like-minded nations to determine the best means of implementing the resolution's call for a moratorium on <u>all</u> high seas driftnet fishing by June 30, 1992 unless or until effective conservation and management measures are taken to prevent unacceptable impacts of such fishing practices.

The conservation of living marine resources goes beyond the problem of driftnetting. The respect for quota management regimes, based on sound scientific advice, is also key to preserving the world's marine resources for future generations. This is why Canada will not relent in its efforts to eliminate all forms of overfishing on the high seas.

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

news release

Date

For release

NR-HQ-91-025E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 31, 1991

NEW TRILATERAL DRIFTNET OBSERVER AGREEMENT SIGNED

OTTAWA --- Fisheries and Oceans Minister John C. Crosbie and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall announced today that the trilateral driftnet observer agreement among Canada, the U.S. and Japan for the North Pacific squid and tuna fishery has been renegotiated and will apply for the period of May 1991 to June 1992.

Following consultations with Canada and the United States, Japan has agreed to the placement of 61 scientific observers --- 10 of them Canadian, 30 American and 21 Japanese --- on its squid driftnet vessels. The observers will monitor the catch and bycatch of the Japanese vessels and collect biological samples for study. The Canadian observers will continue to be placed on Japanese squid vessels which fish close to Canadian salmon migration paths.

"Canada's active participation in the trilateral monitoring program for Japan's squid driftnet fishery reflects our commitment to effective conservation and protection of the living marine resources of the oceans," Mr. Crosbie said.

The agreement also requires that all Japanese driftnet vessels carry satellite transmitters on board to allow monitoring of their movements and ensure they confine their fishing efforts to prescribed fishing areas.

In addition Japan will pursue, during the above period, a regulatory enforcement and information gathering program including a continued freeze on the number of driftnet vessels licensed to fish by the Government of Japan; undertakings to prevent reflagging of such vessels; a prohibition on the talking of salmon, even incidentally; and a doubling of port confinement penalties for violations by Japanese squid driftnet vessels.

"This renegotiated agreement is an important element in the implementation of the 1989 and 1990 United Nations resolutions on driftnet fishing," Mrs. McDougall said. Canada is a key sponsor of the resolutions that call for a moratorium on all driftnet operations by mid-1992 unless effective measures are taken to prevent unacceptable impacts of such fishing practices. Collection and scientific assessment of driftnet fishing are essential steps in carrying out the U.N. resolutions.

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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

NR-PR-91-06

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 13, 1991

STING SNAGS INTERNATIONAL HIGH-SEAS SALMON POACHERS

VANCOUVER--- A conspiracy to launder and sell North American-origin salmon caught illegally in the high-seas of the North Pacific Ocean has been thwarted by Canadian and American authorities, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans John C. Crosbie announced today.

Two U.S. citizens were arrested, in Seattle, Washington and San Francisco, California, May 12, 1991. The arrests followed a joint undercover investigation carried out by a team of Department of Fisheries and Oceans fishery officers currently assigned to the investigation of illegal salmon marketing activities, and by U.S. authorities.

"This enforcement operation has been an excellent example of cooperation between our two countries," said Mr. Crosbie. "It underscores our commitment to stopping through scientific, diplomatic and enforcement methods, the illegal harvest and sale of resources that rightfully belong to the people of Canada and the United States."

The alleged conspiracy involved some 533 tonnes of chum and coho salmon valued at over $1 million. An attempt was made to transport the fish from Taiwan to China and Thailand and then to launder the shipment through Chile. Falsified certificates of origin were to be prepared in Chile in an attempt to legitimize the transaction before final shipment of the fish to Canada and the U.S.

Charged with offenses under U.S. law are Kunioka Takayama of San Francisco, California and Hermes Leone of Miami, Florida. Both are charged with conspiracy to import unlawfully caught fish, and conspiracy to acquire, receive, transport, and sell unlawfully caught fish (under the U.S. Lacey Act); smuggling goods, and conspiracy to transport, transmit, and transfer monetary instruments of funds from the U.S. to Thailand to promote or carry on a specified unlawful activity (under U.S. Customs legislation).

"The dedicated effort by Canadian and U.S. enforcement personnel in bringing this laundering venture to a halt is to be applauded," said Mr. Crosbie. "Hopefully, our success in this operation will make any would-be poachers think twice about stealing salmon and depriving Canadian fishermen of potential catch. By closing down the market for illegally caught fish, we are removing the incentive for theft of salmon resources on the high seas."

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BACKGROUNDER

FICHE D'INFORMATION

MAY 13, 1991.

SALMON LAUNDERING: ENFORCEMENT ACTION

For more than three years Canada and the United States have made a concerted effort to curb the illegal sale of North American salmon caught on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. Repeated attempts have been made to sell high seas salmon by laundering the fish illegally through other countries and then introducing them into the major markets of North America, Japan and Europe. These fish are caught principally by Taiwanese driftnet vessels, then processed in southeast Asian countries such as Thailand and Singapore. Commitments by both governments to try to stop fish canning and processing companies in their countries from handling high seas salmon have taken effect but shipments still continue at a reduced rate.

In 1989, Patrick Lee, a seafood broker from Taiwan was convicted in the United States along with five other persons. They had been involved in an international scheme to illegally catch salmon in the North Pacific using Taiwanese fishing vessels and then market these fish in the United States, Japan and other countries. The investigation leading to the arrest of Mr. Lee and his counterparts was carried out by a team of Canadian and U.S. fishery investigators. Both countries have maintained special investigation units to focus on these kinds of illegal activities.

The amount of illegal trade in salmon controlled by Taiwanese operators is estimated to be 6,000 - 8,000 tonnes worldwide and is maintained by a sophisticated laundering program which has been traced as far as Singapore, Thailand, China and Chile. Canning and freezing plants in these countries are laundering processed North American salmon for re-export to Japan, Australia and Europe as well as attempting to move fish into Canada and the United States.

Canada has been working closely with U.S. enforcement authorities to prevent attempts by brokers to launder Pacific high-seas-caught salmon through North American ports and third-world countries. Long-range surveillance flights by Department of National Defence Aurora aircraft were instituted in 1990 to deter illegal fishing activity in the North Pacific, and a Canada/U.S.A. Working Group on High Seas Salmon Enforcement, joined by representatives from the U.S.S.R. and Japan, was established to develop strategies for eliminating the illegal salmon trade. In addition to investigative

activities, Canada has undertaken wide-ranging diplomatic and scientific detection efforts to curb the illegal harvest and sale of North-American origin salmon.

Those efforts include participating in negotiations on a new North Pacific Salmon Convention to prohibit all high-seas salmon fishing and co-sponsorship of U.N. resolutions that call for moratoria on high-seas driftnet fishing by 1992 unless or until effective conservation and management measures are taken to prevent unacceptable impacts.

Canada is continuing to work actively within the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC) and with the enforcement authorities of the U.S., Japan and the U.S.S.R. to deter further salmon trafficking of this nature. In addition, Canadian customs officers are under instructions to detain all shipments of Pacific salmon imported into Canada from non-INPFC member countries.

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

news release

Date

For release

HQ-NR-90-055E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 21, 1990

NEW U.N. DRIFTNET RESOLUTION ON COURSE FOR 1992 MORATORIUM

OTTAWA --- The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, and the Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Robert de Cotret, welcomed today the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a new resolution on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing. The resolution, which was adopted by consensus, is a part of international efforts to curb high seas driftnet fishing operations and the threat they pose to sea life.

Canada is one of the key sponsors of this year's resolution which reaffirms the 1989 U.N. resolution's call for moratoria by June 30, 1992 on all high seas driftnet fishing unless or until effective conservation and management measures are taken to prevent the unacceptable impact of driftnets on the living resources of the sea.

"Canada's sponsorship of a new U.N. resolution reflects our commitment to effective international cooperation in curtailing high seas driftnet fishing. Together with like-minded countries we remain determined to put an end to the destruction of sea life by driftnets," stated Mr. Clark.

The resolution underscores concerns over reported attempts at circumventing the 1989 resolution, notably over the expansion of driftnetting into new areas and reflagging of driftnet vessels.

"Canada has been in the forefront in gathering solid information on the effects of driftnetting," said Mr. Valcourt. "This has been instrumental in laying the foundation for the international community to take action. The 1989 and the 1990 U.N. resolutions require those operating driftnet fleets prove that driftnetting can be conducted in an environmentally sound manner or else the moratoria will take effect."

"This year's resolution marks a further step towards effective conservation of sea life and the protection of marine eco-systems," said Mr. de Cotret.

Further to the 1989 and 1990 U.N. resolutions, the Government of Canada will host a special international meeting in British Columbia in June, 1991 to review the best available scientific data on the impact of high seas driftnet fisheries in the North Pacific.

Along with Canada, among the co-sponsors of the U.N. resolution were Australian, Barbados, most countries of the European Community, Japan, New Zealand, Papau New Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, the U.S.S.R. and Vanuatu.

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BACKGROUNDER

FICHE D'INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 7, 1990

NORTH PACIFIC CONSERVATION

1. INTERNATIONAL NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

The International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC) was established under the terms of the International Convention for the High Seas Fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean in June of 1953. Canada, the U.S.A. and Japan are the parties to the Convention.

The INPFC's prime objective is to minimize interception of North American-origin salmon on the high seas, and thereby contribute to their conservation.

Japan has been the only country consistently engaged in directed high seas salmon fisheries in the North Pacific Ocean. These Japanese fisheries have been tightly regulated under the Convention. Over the last 37 years the INPFC has required that the Japanese salmon fleets shift westward in the North Pacific, closer to Asia, to limit Japanese interceptions of North American-origin salmonids.

The annual meetings of the INPFC are a forum to regulate the Japanese high seas salmon fishery and to exchange scientific information regarding high seas fisheries for salmon and non-salmon species, such as squid, in the North Pacific.

The Japanese high seas fishery is also regulated by a Japan-U.S.S.R. fisheries agreement, which sets annual salmon quotas for Japan.

Specifically, the annual INPFC meetings:

1) adopt measures to limit interceptions of North American-origin salmon in Japan's directed high seas salmon fisheries and in other fisheries;

2) monitor the phase-out of the Japanese salmon fishery in the Bering Sea;

3) review progress on research programs identifying continent of origin of salmonids in the high seas of the North Pacific, particularly within the Japanese salmon fishing areas;

4) review data on incidental capture of marine mammals in the salmon fisheries and the results of experiments aimed at eliminating this by-catch; and

5) review and exchange scientific information on species exploited in the North Pacific and Bering Sea fisheries.

In recent years the INPFC has focused its attention on the impacts of driftnet fisheries on marine species and seabirds. The effects of lost and discarded marine debris in the North Pacific and Bering Sea have been examined. At Canada's initiative, a special working group was formed in 1989 to examine alternatives to driftnet fishing. The INPFC has also discussed joint efforts to halt the international commerce in high seas salmon caught by non-INPFC members such as Taiwan.

INPFC was formed before the 1982 U.N. Law of the Sea which said that countries in whose rivers salmon originate have the primary interest in and responsibility for such stocks. To reflect this important development in international law, discussions began recently on creating a replacement for INPFC which could incorporate the Soviet Union, the U.S., Canada, and Japan and possibly other countries. This new convention would, if adopted, provide for more comprehensive protection of salmon from high seas interception.

BACKGROUNDER
FICHE D'INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 7, 1990

NORTH PACIFIC CONSERVATION

2. SALMON INTERCEPTION ON THE HIGH SEAS

There are two dimensions to salmon interceptions by high seas driftnet vessels operating in accordance with their domestic laws in the North Pacific Ocean. The first dimension is the fishing by the Japanese fleet that is specifically directed at salmon. The second dimension is the driftnet fishery directed at squid but which can also take incidental catches of salmon.

The directed salmon fishery is conducted by Japan in the Western Pacific and Central Bering Sea. This fishery is strictly regulated by the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission and by the Japanese-U.S.S.R. Fisheries Agreement. Small numbers of B.C. steelhead, Yukon chinook and possibly Yukon chum salmon are being taken in this fishery. However, there is no evidence that significant numbers of Canadian-origin salmon are now being caught.

The squid driftnet fishery is conducted by about 800 vessels from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, south of the salmon fishery. There is sometimes an overlap of squid and salmon and this can result in unintentional or accidental catch of salmon by squid fishing vessels. Canadian fisheries research vessels have caught salmon on the eastern and northern margins of the squid fishery, which confirms that the potential exists.

A related problem was created in 1989 when Japan unilaterally extended the seasonal northern boundary of the squid fishery, which means an increased potential for salmon interceptions in the squid fishery. Canada has never agreed to this northward extension at 46 degrees. Canada and the U.S. have strongly pressed Japan to roll back the boundary to lower latitudes to reduce the likelihood of interception of North American salmon. Japan agreed to consider adjusting the seasonal squid boundary in 1991 if the at-sea observations during 1990 indicate this is necessary.

A more significant problem for catching salmon, is the "pirates" -- - those vessels that cross the squid fishery boundary to deliberately target the salmon. In particular, vessels from Taiwan have been sighted in the area of the directed salmon fishery on numerous occassions and this gives rise to concerns about the extent of these catches, which are illegal under Taiwanese law.

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BACKGROUNDER

FICHE D'INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 7, 1990

NORTH PACIFIC CONSERVATION

3. SALMON LAUNDERING

According to the Law of the Sea, countries where salmon spawn have the primary interest in conserving and harvesting those fish. As salmon migrate from the rivers where they are spawned and on their ocean journey, they risk being intercepted on the high seas.

Under international law, high seas fishing form salmon is unacceptable. However, there has been an exception permitted for the Japanese high seas salmon fishery, which is strictly regulated by the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC).

The INPFC is deeply concerned about fishing for salmon by non-member countries. In 1985 the three INPFC members -- Canada, the U.S., and Japan -- adopted import prohibitions on salmon harvested in the North Pacific by vessels other than those of the three countries. These import controls are designed to curtail high seas salmon marketing by fleets from these countries.

"Illegal" salmon continue to be caught by Taiwanese fleets in the North Pacific and marketed through third countries. The bulk of this trade is occurring through Thailand, Singapore, and Hong Kong where the raw product is either frozen or canned for export to Europe and Australia.

Canada believes that this fish marketing includes North American-origin salmonids from the North Pacific Ocean. The size of the illegal trade in salmon from all sources, North American and Asian, is estimated at over 10,000 tonnes.

Canada has been working closely with U.S. enforcement authorities to prevent attempts by Taiwanese brokers to "launder" Pacific high seas salmon through North American ports and third countries. A number of seizures and arrests have already occurred.

In addition, the U.S./Taiwan driftnet monitoring agreement, signed in 1989, will lead to a reduction in illegal salmon harvesting. The agreement allows U.S. observers on some Taiwanese vessels, and transmitters on all Taiwanese vessels. Both Canada and the U.S. are also pressing other governments to prevent their industries from participating in this salmon trade.

Canada held bilateral consultations with Thailand in September, 1990, to discuss import controls on salmon of Taiwanese origin whether imported directly or from third countries. Thailand has agreed to ensure its canning industry withdraws from such purchases. Canada is currently seeking bilateral discussions with other south-east Asian countries to obtain similar commitments.

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BACKGROUNDER
FICHE D'INFORMATION

NOVEMBER 7, 1990

NORTH PACIFIC CONSERVATION

4. THE HIGHSEAS DRIFTNET FISHING PROBLEM

Driftnetting has become a symbol of uncontrolled and wasteful high seas fishing.

The Technique

Driftnetting is a fishing method which uses a series of nets that hang 8-10 metres vertically in the water with floats on the top and weights on the bottom. The series of connected nets may range from 16 to 50 km in length.

The size of the driftnet mesh -- meaning the openings in the net -- vary depending on the main species being targeted. Large size mesh will catch large fish while small-size mesh will catch small fish.

There are three types of driftnet fishing in the North Pacific: the Japanese driftnet fisheries for salmon; the Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese driftnet fisheries for squid; and the Japanese and Taiwanese large-mesh driftnet fisheries for species such as marline and albacore tuna.

Increase in Driftnetting

Japan initiated salmon driftnetting in international waters of the North Pacific in the early 1950's. This activity was controlled through a bilateral treaty with the Soviet Union for Asian-origin stocks, and trilateral agreements with Canada and the U.S. under the International North Pacific Fisheries Convention (INPFC) for North American stocks.

However, massive increases in squid driftnetting took place in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Japan increased its squid driftnet fishery after its salmon quotas were reduced in 1978 as a result of negotiations with the USSR and with the INPFC. As a result, some 170 salmon driftnet vessels entered the squid fishery.

After Japan expanded its high seas squid driftnet fishery in the early 1980's, similar fisheries were developed by the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. These have expanded in recent years. The

Koreans and Taiwanese have fished over a wider ocean area than Japan, particularly in the Western Pacific. This increases the likelihood of salmon interceptions, whether deliberate or accidental.

The Efficiency of Driftnetting

Driftnetting has become a more widespread form of fishing primarily for economic reasons. Driftnetting is more economical than other forms of fishing such as jigging or longlining because it uses less labour and fuel for higher catches. Also, because the squid in the North Pacific - flying squid - do not group together, it is easier to harvest them by using long sets of connected nets than by using a fishing line with jigs or hooks. When tuna prices fell in the late 1970's there was an additional incentive for longline vessels to explore other fishing methods such as squid driftnet fishing.

The Destructiveness of Driftnetting

Driftnet fishing is non-selective, wasteful and destructive of species other than those sought by driftnetters. Large numbers of non-targeted fish, mammals, turtles and birds have been caught in driftnet mesh and died.

Other unwanted fish have been discarded. Driftnetters fishing for flying squid in the North Pacific have caught Pacific pomfret, albacore tuna, dolphins, porpoises and fur seals, as well as seabirds.

NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

NR-PR-90-18

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 5, 1990

NEW WEAPON AGAINST ILLEGAL DRIFTNET FISHING

VANCOUVER...Canada has begun using long-range surveillance flights by Department of National Defence Aurora aircraft in its efforts to combat illegal driftnet fishing, Fisheries Minister Bernard Valcourt announced today.

The most recent mission was a five-day patrol by an Aurora over the North Pacific Ocean, using highly sophisticated radar and other surveillance equipment. "For the first time DFO and DND joined forces this summer to carry out surveillance of illegal driftnet fishing," said Minister Valcourt.

Each surveillance mission covers a vast expanse of ocean bounded by Alaska and Korea, the Aleutian Islands and Hawaii. Each has personnel from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans aboard.

The increased Canadian enforcement effort is the result of cooperative action that began in April 1990 with the establishment of a Canada/USA Working Group to halt the trade of North American origin salmon caught illegally in the North Pacific Ocean. Representatives of both the Soviet Union and Japan are also attending meetings of the Working Group, which was formed to exchange intelligence and to develop strategies to halt the illegally caught driftnet salmon trade.

"Flights by radar-equipped Aurora aircraft are a very effective way to patrol large areas of ocean for vessels," Mr. Valcourt said. The radar may detect a vessel 150 nautical miles away, so it is effectively searching an area 300 miles wide. On a 1,000 mile-long surveillance flight, it may detect any vessel in an area of 300,000 square miles.

Under international conservation rules only Canada, the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and Japan can legitimately catch salmon in the North Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Valcourt said Canada has taken other steps to stop illegal driftnet fishing, including the negotiation of a comprehensive enforcement and monitoring agreement with Japan, an import ban on Taiwan caught salmon and scientific research into alternative fishing methods.

Canada was also a key sponsor of a United Nations resolution that calls for a moratorium on all driftnet operations by mid-1992 unless effective conservation and management measures are taken to prevent the unacceptable consequences of this practice. In the interim, the resolution's call for immediate cessation of expansion of driftnet fishing in the North Pacific has been implemented as a result of bilateral consultations held earlier this year by American and Canadian authorities with Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

PR-90-013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 13, 1990

VALCOURT RELEASES RESULTS OF DRIFTNET OBSERVER PROGRAM

VANCOUVER... Fisheries and Oceans Minister Bernard Valcourt released in Canada a report prepared from data collected during the 1989 Japanese squid driftnet fishery. The report says substantial numbers of mammals, birds and fish other than squid were caught in the 1989 driftnet fishery.

"The results obtained from the observer program represent a significant advance in understanding what is caught in the Japanese squid driftnet fishery," said Mr. Valcourt. "They show us the need to maintain pressure on the Asian drift-netting countries to curtail this method of fishing in accordance with the United Nations resolution," he said.

Canada is a key sponsor of a United Nations resolution that calls for a moratorium on all driftnet operations by mid-1992 unless effective measures are taken to prevent unacceptable consequences of such fishing and to ensure conservation of sea life. The resolution also calls for an immediate cessation of further expansion of driftnet fishing in the North Pacific and in all other high sea areas.

"While we are very concerned about the high catch of animals in the driftnet fishery, commercial fishermen will be pleased to learn that very few salmon were taken," said Mr. Valcourt.

During the 1989 fishing season, five Canadian, nine U.S. and 32 Japanese observers were placed on 32 squid driftnet vessels. The observer program gave Canadian biologists an opportunity to study the nature and extent of the fishery in detail.

During 1990, 10 Canadian, 35 U.S. and 29 Japanese observers will be placed on 74 Japanese squid driftnet vessels to monitor the catch and bycatch, and to collect biological samples for additional study.

More information on each animal group is attached.

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BACKGROUNDER
FICHE D'INFORMATION

JULY 13, 1990

SCIENTIFIC DATA FROM DRIFTNET OBSERVER PROGRAM

Squid and fish

Three million neon flying squid, the target species, were taken in the greatest number. Pacific pomfret, a species with little or no commercial value at this time, were discarded in the largest number (over 1.4 million). The bycatch included 59,060 albacore tuna, a commercially important species in the N. Pacific. Fishing crews discard small albacore or if the squid fishing is good, even larger ones. Albacore also drop out of nets during retrieval. This highly migratory species is caught in Canadian waters. It is not known whether the squid driftnet fishery affects the Canadian catch of albacore tuna. Blue shark were caught in approximately the same quantities (58,100) as albacore.

Salmonids

Only 79 salmonids of all species were recorded. This low number of salmon is consistent with information obtained by Canadian biologists on research trips (eg. Arctic Harvester, Shoyo Maru) during the summer of 1989.

Marine mammals and seabirds

In total, 914 dolphins were killed in the fishery. Northern right whale dolphins were taken in the greatest numbers (455) followed by Pacific white-sided dolphins (254) and Dall's porpoise (141) and other less common species. Eighty northern fur seals (Callorhinus ursinus) were either dead or lost. One hundred and two fur seals were released alive. There is a considerable body of scientific information on the populations of Dall's porpoise and northern fur seal which will be useful in assessing the effect of the fishery on these species.

Dark shearwaters, both sooty and short-tailed, constituted 92% of the bycatch of 9,173 seabirds. These species breed in the South Pacific and move into the North Pacific during our summer. They are probably the most abundant of seabirds in the Pacific.

NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

NR-HQ-90-013E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 24, 1990

STEPS TO CURTAIL HIGH SEAS DRIFTNET FISHING

OTTAWA ... The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, today announced additional steps to control and curtail high seas driftnet fishing in the North Pacific Ocean.

On May 22, a team of DFO scientific researchers left Nanaimo, B.C., aboard the departmental research vessel, the W.E. Ricker, to gather data on high seas squid driftnet fisheries.

The research cruise is aimed primarily at obtaining more information about the number and origin of salmon caught by high seas squid driftnets in the North Pacific. In addition, oceanographic observations will be taken and scientific researchers will monitor the incidental catch of marine mammals, birds and other sea life, and incidents of discarded driftnets in the squid driftnet fishing area and in waters north of this area.

The DFO research cruise follows the conclusion by Canada of new agreements with Japan and Korea aimed at curtailing the negative effects of driftnet fisheries said Mr. Clark and Mr. Valcourt.

"These agreements are welcome steps towards effective implementation of the 1989 United Nations resolution on driftnet fishing," stated Mr. Clark.

The U.N. resolution, of which Canada was a key sponsor, calls for enhanced collection and sharing of scientific data on the impacts of driftnet fishing, prior to a review by mid-1991. It also calls for a moratorium on all driftnet operations by mid-1992 unless effective measures are taken to prevent unacceptable consequences of such fishing and to ensure conservation of sea life. The resolution also calls for an immediate cessation of further expansion of driftnet fishing in the North Pacific, and in all other high seas areas.

Following consultations with Canada and the United States, Japan has agreed to the placement of 98 scientific observers - 41 Japanese and 57

North Americans - on its squid and large mesh tuna driftnet vessels in 1990, more than double the number last year. The 57 North American observers will include 10 Canadians.

In order to prevent the interception of North-American salmon outside the area where the squid fishery takes place, Japan will provide for real-time satellite tracking of all its squid and large-mesh driftnet vessels in the North Pacific. In accordance with the U.N. resolution, Japan will not expand its driftnet operations in the area.

With respect to Japan's 1989 northward extension of the northern boundary for its squid fishing operations, Mr. Valcourt said: "Canada and the U.S. strongly pressed Japan to roll back the boundary to lower latitudes to reduce the likelihood of interception of North American salmon. Japan agreed to consider adjusting the boundary next year based on the findings of at-sea observers." During the 1990 season, Canadian observers will be placed on Japanese vessels in areas where these concerns remain strongest. Japan maintains that salmon interceptions have been minimal in this area in the recent past.

With regard to consultations with the Republic of Korea, the Ministers welcomed Korea's commitment not to expand its fishing effort in the North Pacific beyond that of last year, consistent with the U.N. Driftnet Resolution. Canada and Korea have also agreed on an exchange of scientists on their research vessels during the 1991 fishing season. The two countries have also agreed to exchange information and personnel from their respective fisheries research and scientific institutes.

"Canada has a vigorous program of action regarding foreign high seas driftnet fisheries which includes research, scientific observer monitoring, surveillance and joint initiatives with the U.S.," said Minister Valcourt. He emphasized his strong concern over the impact of high-seas driftnets which capture large numbers of marine mammals and seabirds, and intercept a variety of non-targeted fish species, including Canadian salmon.

"Canada's active participation in the Japanese and Korean monitoring programs reflects our commitment to effective conservation of the

living resources of the sea. Canada will continue its efforts to curtail driftnet fishing, both through bilateral negotiation and multilaterally, within the framework of the United Nations," concluded Mr. Clark.

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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 9, 1989

SIDDON COMMENDS INTERNATIONAL BODY FOR ACCEPTING CANADIAN INITIATIVE

OTTAWA --- Fisheries and Oceans Minister Tom Siddon today commended the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (INPFC) for accepting a Canadian proposal to examine alternative technologies to high seas driftnet fishing in the Pacific.

Commenting at the conclusion of an INPFC meeting in Seattle, Washington, Mr. Siddon said he was "pleased that this important international body has agreed to our proposal to establish a working group to investigate the environmental impacts of driftnet fishing and alternative technologies.

Mr. Siddon noted that this is not the first time Canada has taken the lead in bringing driftnets under control. In 1987 Canada became the first nation to ban the use of high seas driftnet in its 200-mile zone, a move which was unprecedented at the time, and which was soon followed by other countries.

Mr. Siddon insisted that alternatives to driftnetting must be found. He said the Canadian proposal for a working group was approved at the annual INPFC meeting after the Commission examined preliminary results from the Canadian, American and Japanese scientific research on the driftnet fishery last summer.

The INPFC, comprising Canada, the U.S. and Japan, coordinates scientific research on salmonids and other species in the North Pacific Ocean and, under the terms of the International Convention for the High Seas Fisheries in the North Pacific Ocean, seeks to prevent high seas catches of North American-origin salmon.

At this year's meeting, agreement was sought on additional monitoring and enforcement controls for Japanese vessels engaged in commercial driftnet fishing in 1990. These include the installation of locational transmitter devices and increasing the number of North American observers on board the Japanese fleet. Trilateral consultations on these matters will be held early next year.

Other Canadian initiatives at this year's INPFC meeting:

Canada vigorously opposed the "pirate" driftnet fisheries which illegally target salmon and engage in fraudulent marketing and import-export schemes. INPFC encouraged further international co-operation in this regard.

Canada again objected to Japan's unilateral choice of a "northern boundary" for its squid driftnet fishing activity, pointing out the danger of North American-origin salmon being intercepted in this area.

Canada reiterated its support for the establishment of a new international marine science organization for the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea. It would expand the scientific knowledge of the biology and oceanography of the North Pacific Ocean and address such pressing matters as global climate change.

Mr. Siddon said he welcomed all the support and encouragement which he has received showing that Canadians and Americans support tough action against driftnets.

He said he was particularly encouraged by the call for action made earlier this week by the governments of B.C. and of the six states of the Pacific Northwestern U.S.

"I welcome these interventions, and I urge concerned governments and citizens everywhere to keep the heat on this issue. I think we're making definite progress, and I for one don't intend to let up now."

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NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 20, 1989

SIDDON COMMENTS AT THE CONCLUSION OF DRIFTNET CONFERENCE

VANCOUVER --- Fisheries and Oceans Minister Tom Siddon stated today that the conclusions reached at a two-day conference on high seas driftnet fishing in the Pacific Ocean strongly support the Canadian Government's approach to the driftnet issue.

"Make no mistake about Canada's position in regard to the rapid growth and unregulated use of high seas driftnets in the North Pacific. We are clearly opposed to it. We are prepared to take tough, realistic action in concert with strong and committed allies ... and with solid scientific evidence that proves we know what we are talking about. We will continue using all opportunities to express our grave concerns over the environmental and economic impacts of the high seas driftnet fisheries on the stocks of North American salmon and populations of sea birds and marine mammals," added Mr. Siddon.

Mr. Siddon underlined the leading role played by the Government of Canada in focusing international attention on the effects of high seas driftnet fishing. "Canada banned this type of fishing within our 200-mile zone in 1987. Since then, we have concentrated enforcement, diplomatic and research efforts to develop greater controls on the high seas for the benefit of all responsible fishing nations."

Canada will continue to insist on effective actions against any high seas fishing practices which harm the environment and take fish belonging to Canadians," said Mr. Siddon.

In a joint communiqué issued following the conference, participants stressed the need for concerted scientific and diplomatic efforts as the best means to control high seas driftnet fishing by Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

"The scientific work I have commissioned this summer will obtain some of the hard data needed to demonstrate conclusively what we all know to be the truth about the effects of high seas driftnet

fishing," said Mr. Siddon. "The preliminary results of this work will be available for presentation to the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting slated for Seattle October 29 - November 9, 1989, added Mr. Siddon.

The Conference, co-hosted by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the province of British Columbia, brought together scientists, fisheries managers and senior government officials from the federal governments of Canada, the United States, the province of B.C. and the states of Alaska, Washington, Oregan, Idaho and California.

Mr. Siddon noted that the statement of principles drafted by the conference participants is relevant to all forms of high seas fishing beyond the 200-mile zone of coastal states. "Conservation and rational management of fishing activities, and a recognition of the rights of coastal states are fundamental to the modern law of the sea. No fishing methods, whether by driftnets or other gear, can be allowed to undermine the sustainable resources of the oceans," Mr. Siddon said.

Mr. Siddon also stressed that Canadian authorities are cooperating closely in enforcement actions with American agencies. This cooperation will continue in order to eliminate the illegal marketing of salmon caught in high seas driftnet fisheries.

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